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MS115203.01/MSFTP334US

REMARKS

Claims 1-50 are currently pending in the subject application and are presently under consideration. Applicants' representative notes with appreciation the indication that claims 31, 39 and 40 have been allowed and the rationale provided by the Examiner for such allowance. In accordance with the proffered rationale independent claims 1, 25, 41 and 50 have been amended herein to incorporate subject matter deemed allowable by the Examiner, and claim 6 has been cancelled. In addition, applicants' representative respectfully requests rejoinder of non-elected claims pursuant to MPEP §821.04 and 37 C.F.R. §1.121. To this end, claims 7-24, 32-38 and 43-49 meet all criteria for patentability including the requirements set forth under 35 U.S.C. §§ 101, 102, 103 and 112, and further, either depend from or otherwise recite all the limitations of an allowable claim. A version of all pending claims can be found at pages 2-16 of this Reply. Favorable reconsideration of the subject patent application is respectfully requested in view of the comments and amendments herein.

I. Rejection of Claims 1-4 and 50 Under 35 U.S.C. §102(e)

Claims 1-4 and 50 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Yablonski *et al.* (US 6,577,304). Withdrawal of this rejection is requested for at least the following reason. Independent claims 1 and 50 have been amended to incorporate subject matter deemed allowable by the Examiner. Accordingly, it is believed that this rejection is moot and thus should be withdrawn.

II. Rejection of Claims 1-5, 25-30, 41-42 and 50 Under 35 U.S.C. §102(e)

Claims 1-5, 25-30, 41-42 and 50 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Sugiyama *et al.* (US 6,002,403). This rejection should be withdrawn for at least the following reasons. Independent claims 1, 25, 41 and 50 have been amended to comport with the Examiner's indication of allowance. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection with respect to independent claims 1, 25, 41 and 50 (and associated dependent claims) is requested.

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III. Rejection of Claims 5, 27 and 30 Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 5, 27 and 30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable in view of Sugiyama *et al.* (US 6,002,403). Withdrawal of this rejection is requested for at least the following reasons. Claims 5, 27 and 30 depend from independent claims 1 and 25, and for reasons stated *supra* it is believed that the aforementioned independent claims are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is requested.

IV. Rejection of Claim 5 Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claim 5 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C §103(a) as being unpatentable in view of Yablonski *et al.* (US 6,577,304). This rejection should be withdrawn for at least the following reasons. Claim 5 depends from independent claim 1, and for reasons stated above it is believed that independent claim 1 is in condition for allowance as a consequence of amendments made herein to incorporate subject matter deemed allowable by the Examiner. Accordingly, this rejection should be withdrawn.

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CONCLUSION

The present application is believed to be in condition for allowance in view of the above comments and amendments. A prompt action to such end is earnestly solicited.

In the event any fees are due in connection with this document, the Commissioner is authorized to charge those fees to Deposit Account No. 50-1063 [MSFTP334US].

Should the Examiner believe a telephone interview would be helpful to expedite favorable prosecution, the Examiner is invited to contact applicants' undersigned representative at the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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